

Competing Memories

The aftermath of modern conflicts, deeply rooted in political, economic, and social structures, leaves pervasive and often recurring legacies of violence. Addressing past injustice is therefore fundamental not only for societal well-being and peace but also for future conflict prevention. In recent years, Truth and Reconciliation Commissions have become important but contentious mechanisms for conflict resolution and reconciliation. This book fills a significant gap, examining the importance of context within transitional justice and peace-building. It lays out long-term and often unexpected indirect effects of formal and informal justice processes. Offering a novel conceptual understanding of “procedural reconciliation” on the societal level, it features an in-depth study of Commissions in Peru and Sierra Leone, providing a critical analysis of the contribution and challenges facing transitional justice in societies recovering from conflict. It will be of interest to scholars and students of comparative politics, international relations, human rights, and conflict studies.

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Competing Memories

*Truth and Reconciliation in Sierra Leone
and Peru*

Rebekka Friedman

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The remote village of Uchuraccay, Ayacucho, was deserted during Peru's decades of political violence, following severe attacks from the Shining Path and military. At the right is the Santuario de la Paz y Reconciliación (Sanctuary of Peace and Reconciliation), commemorating the attack on eight journalists, mainly from the capital, and their guide on January 26, 1983. Although subject to high-level investigations, responsibility for the attack remains disputed and many have criticized the little attention generated by villagers' experiences of violence before and since the attack. Where women head many of the homes in the village, the photo signifies resilience and hope in the women's rebuilding of life and community. It also highlights the politics of voice and representation, where residents of the region remain isolated and struggle to navigate the difficult realities of daily life. Photo taken by author in October 2010.

Abbreviations and Definitions

Afectado	Individual affected by political violence (Peru)
AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (Sierra Leone)
ANC	African National Congress (South African political party)
ANFASEP	Asociación Nacional de Familiares de Secuestrados, Detenidos y Desaparecidos del Perú (Organization in Ayacucho for relatives of victims, Peru)
APC	All People’s Congress (Political party, Sierra Leone)
APRA	Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (Political party, Peru)
Campesinos	Peasants (Spanish)
CDCs	Civil defense committees (Sierra Leone)
COSMA	La Comisión de Salud Mental de Ayacucho (Mental health organization in Ayacucho, set up as a follow-up to the CVR’s mental health reparations plan, Peru)
CVR	Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Peru)
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States
EPAF	Equipo Peruano Antropológico Forénsico (Forensic anthropology organization, Peru)
Fambul Tok	Family Talk (Translated from Krio. Community-level reconciliation project, run by Forum of Conscience, Sierra Leone)
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICTR	International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda

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ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia
IDEHPUCP	El Instituto de Democracia y Derechos Humanos de la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (Institute of Democracy and Human Rights, Peru)
IPAC	Instituto de Promoción Agropecuaria y Comunal (Agrarian and development NGO, Peru)
Kamajor	Traditional Mende hunters (Sierra Leone)
La Colina	Death squad made up of armed forces under President Fujimori and National Intelligence Director, Vladimiro Montesinos (Peru)
MOVADEF	Movimiento Por Amnistía y Derechos Fundamentales (Movement for Amnesty and Fundamental Rights, Peru)
MRTA	Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru (Tupac Amaru Movement, Peru)
NACSA	The National Commission for Social Action (Reparations Commission, Sierra Leone)
NFHR	National Forum for Human Rights (Sierra Leone)
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NPRC	National Provisional Ruling Council
PUCP	Pontificia Católica del Perú (Catholic University, Peru)
Pueblos Jóvenes	Shanty Towns (Peru)
Rondas Campesinas	Peasant patrol groups (Peru)
RUF	Revolutionary United Front (Sierra Leone)
Sendero Luminoso	Shining Path (Peru)
SCSL	Special Court for Sierra Leone
SLA	Sierra Leone Army
SLPP	Sierra Leone People’s Party
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UNSCH	Universidad Nacional de San Cristóbal de Huamanga